

WILMINGTON 2013-14 Progress Report

CITY OF WILMINGTON PUBLIC INFORMATION REPORT

Winter 2015: Special Progress Report

Check inside

Learn more about major projects completed last year and find out what's coming up this year.



Your City At Work: By the Numbers

Each year, the city's 1,000 employees provide a variety of services to help maintain the community and keep it safe. These services are paid for with property tax dollars, user fees and state funding. Following is some information that illustrates what citizens received for their money in fiscal year 2014, as well as projects coming up this year.

Public Safety

- WPD: 174,512 annual calls for service
- WFD: 12,792 response calls

Streets

- Lane-miles of roadways maintained: 800
- Miles of sidewalks maintained: 439
- Potholes repaired: 5,482

Solid Waste

- Trash picked up: 23,593 tons (47,186,540 lbs.)
- Recycling picked up: 6,110 tons (12,221,000 lbs.)
- Yard waste picked up: 13,517 tons (27,034,060 lbs.)

Stormwater

- 41 miles of ditches cleaned (manual)
- 336 biannual private retention pond inspections
- 3,120 tons of street sweeping debris collected
- 8,926 miles of streets swept
- 193 storm pipe cave-in repairs

Parks & Landscaping

- 543 acres public parks (35 public parks)
- 21 acres of landscaped areas and greenways (18 locations)
- 196 acres of athletic, recreational facilities
- More than 9 acres of city-owned lots (24 locations)
- Approximately 71 miles of rights-of-way (107 locations) within the city
- Approximately 66 miles of rights-of-way (28 locations) for the NCDOT
- Approximately 13 miles of 127 alley locations
- Approximately 5 miles of medians (17 locations)
- 24 traffic speed reduction devices
- 55 dog waste stations throughout the city
- 35 playground units
- 316 trees planted

Traffic Engineering

- 9,163 streetlights
- 214 traffic signals
- 61 miles of cable for traffic signal system
- 20,000 street and traffic signs

Wilmington at-a-glance

City population, 2013:
112,067

Median age, 2013: 34.6

Gender, 2013:
Female 52.4%
Male 47.6%

Race 2013:
75.3% White
19.8% Black
4.9% American Indian/
Asian/Other
5.6% Hispanic

City Land Area:
52.9 square miles

8th largest city in NC
(population)

Source: US Census Bureau, American FactFinder



2013-2014 Infrastructure Improvements At a glance

Southern Riverwalk

Repairs to older sections of the Riverwalk at Muters Alley, Orange Street and Ann Street have been completed. In conjunction with the repairs, drainage improvements were constructed to help reduce area flooding that occurs in the area during heavy rains.



Northern Riverwalk

A new 1,100-foot section of Riverwalk is almost complete between Harnett and Cowan streets, along the edge of the future Northern Waterfront Park. Once this \$2.1 million section is complete, it will create a continuous 1.75-mile Riverwalk from near the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge to the Isabel Holmes Bridge.

5-year Plan Projects

The city is half way through implementation of a plan that has dedicated \$41 million over five years to make needed infrastructure repairs and upgrades, primarily for street paving, repairs to sidewalks and the downtown riverwalk. The \$41 million has been set aside for the 5-year plan and cannot be used for anything else.

Since the plan was approved, the city has repaved more than 30 lane miles of streets and made stormwater drainage improvements in several areas, including:

- Darlington Avenue
- Park Avenue
- 52nd Street
- Rose Avenue



2013-2014 Recreation Improvements At a glance

Waltmoor Drive, Cross-City Trail

Work is almost complete on construction of a 1.3-mile section of the Cross-City Trail between Wade Park and John D. Barry Drive. This is the last portion of the 15-mile trail that now extends from Wade Park in southern Wilmington to Wrightsville Beach.



Municipal Golf Course

A \$1.5 million renovation of the city's Municipal Golf Course has been completed. The project included doubling the size of the greens and restoring approaches and bunkers to the original Donald Ross specifications. In addition, the practice putting green was renovated and the course received new irrigation, drainage improvements, bunkers and cart paths.

This was the first total restoration of the Donald Ross-designed course since it was fully completed in 1929. On average, about 60,000 rounds of golf are played on the course each year. The course is funded through user fees.



2013-2014 Stormwater Drainage Improvements At a glance

- Rogersville Road: Two smaller drainage pipes were replaced with a much larger, 15½ x 7 foot pipe under Rogersville Road at Landis Farm Road to better handle stormwater during heavy rains. The \$380,000 project will be completed this month.
- S. Bradley Creek/Michelle Drive area: Work began in September on a stormwater drainage improvement project in the South Bradley Creek/Michelle Drive area. The \$4.9 million project involves replacing major stormwater drainage systems and stream restoration for part of the south branch of Bradley Creek. The improvements will help with flooding that occurs in the area during heavy rains. The project will be done in three phases and is expected to take about a year to complete.
- Inland Greens: A \$1.2 million project to improve drainage at the old Inland Greens golf course began this fall. Along with improvements to the existing drainage system, additional drainage for nearby Wiregrass Road was installed as well. The improvements will help

control flooding that occurs during heavy rains. Phase I, which is expected to be completed this summer, also includes installation of a walking path in the passive park.

- Antelope Trail: A \$300,000 project to install new piping to improve drainage between Antelope Trail Drive and Kelly Road was completed last summer. The new piping replaced deteriorated infrastructure, which was installed before the area was annexed in 1998 when there was no formal stormwater program.



2013-2014 Public Safety Improvements At a glance

Violence Prevention Efforts

Over the past year, the city continued several initiatives to reduce gun/gang violence. In 2014, crime dropped to historic lows dating back to 1993, including a significant drop in violence crime in the commercial district of downtown. However, with the spike in violent crime over the past year, WPD officers continue to focus efforts in problem areas.

In this year's budget, the city included funding for additional law enforcement and prevention efforts focused on youth violence reduction, including a full year's funding for the department's Mobile Field Force and Gang Task Force, as well as \$151,000 in additional funding for more staffing to keep community centers open longer and for non-profit agencies that provide services to at-risk youth.

Keeping the community centers opened was one of the recommendations that came out of a series of community conversations the city and agency partners held last year to get citizen input and bring community groups together.

Also in keeping with those recommendations, the WPD has expanded its youth recreation programs to address gang violence by:

- Adding a Saturday Night Hoops Program that focuses on youth ages 12–18;
- Partnering with Greater Wilmington Tennis Association to create Badges & Racquets, a summer tennis camp;
- Creating "The Law and You Program" to teach citizens their rights when being stopped by police officers.

All of these programs are staffed and run by Wilmington Police Department personnel.



New Fire Station

In September, construction began on a new Station 3, located at 114 Cinema Drive. This 14,500-square-foot station will replace the current Station 3 located at 3933 Princess Place Drive and Station 4 located at 310 Wallace Ave.

The property is strategically located to allow this new station, along with remaining existing stations, to provide the citizens of Wilmington with the same level of service currently provided while also updating aging facilities in stations that can accommodate today's larger fire trucks.

The \$3.4 million station will have four bays, whereas most existing stations only have two or three, and will also include a community room for meetings and training. Construction is expected to be completed this fall.

WFD National Accreditation

Last spring, the Wilmington Fire Department was officially accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). There are 30,125 fire departments registered within the United States, with fewer than 200 accredited, or less than 1 percent.

The process, which involved 258 different performance criteria and a visit from peer assessors from the Center of Public Safety Excellence, took more than four years to complete.

2013-2014 Service Improvements At a glance

City's Financial Outlook Strong

- Balanced budget with increased savings
- 5 cents of city tax rate dedicated for \$41 million 5-year infrastructure improvement plan
- Wilmington's debt rate low compared to other NC cities
- Upgraded bond rating to AAA due to good financial condition

Recycling

In 2014, the city saved more than \$235,000 in residential recycling costs, thanks to city recycling customers. It costs the city \$55 per ton to put trash in the county landfill, but only \$20 per ton to recycle it.

Approximately 6,400 tons of plastic bottles, cans, cardboard, newspaper and other recyclable materials were diverted from the county landfill last year, an increase of more than 4 percent from the year before. At the same time, city trash customers threw away almost 4 tons per day less in 2014 than in 2013 – a decrease of 5 percent less trash in the county landfill.



Upcoming Improvements At a glance

Transportation Bond

Several sidewalk projects will get underway this year as the first steps in completing 38 projects identified in the 2014 Transportation Bond. The city hopes to complete all of the projects within five to seven years. Projects tentatively identified as beginning in 2015 include:

- Additional access for Love Grove neighborhood (expected to take substantial planning, permitting time)
- Streetscape improvements for Dawson and Wooster streets
- Crosswalks at 8th/Dawson & 8th/Wooster intersections
- Multi-use trail on South College Road
- Sidewalks on McClelland Drive, Fairlawn Drive, Clover Road, Gleason Road and on Dawson Street from Oleander Drive to Wrightsville Avenue



5-year Infrastructure Improvement Plan

So far this year, the city has paved almost 20 lane miles as part of the 5-year infrastructure improvement plan, including the \$2.5 million project to repave Darlington Avenue, Covil Avenue and Racine Drive, which is currently underway. Other upcoming projects include Pine Valley (west), 41st Street and Greenville Loop Road.

Water Street and Riverfront Park

The city, in conjunction with the US Coast Guard and the Cape Fear Public Utility Authority, will begin a major, \$6.3 million overhaul of Water Street and Riverfront Park beginning this spring. This will include infrastructure improvements and repairs to stormwater and water/sewer systems in the area, along with repairs to the riverwalk, replacing the water fountain and expanding the plaza in front of the Federal Courthouse. The work will take place between the foot of Market Street and extend to Walnut Street and is expected to take about two to three years to complete, depending on the availability of US Coast Guard construction funding.



Inland Greens

In 2016, the city will continue work at Inland Greens with a \$700,000 renovation to the golf course, making it a nine hole, par-3 course. In addition, new landscaping, a parking lot, building upgrades, a playground and other site amenities will be installed.

Water Street Deck Redevelopment

The city plans to finalize negotiations on a multi-million dollar redevelopment of the site of the obsolete Water Street parking deck into a mixed use development that will include private and public parking, residential units and retail space, as well as opening up Chestnut Street and Bijou Park to pedestrian traffic and providing better connectivity to Front Street.



Stormwater Projects

Several stormwater drainage improvement projects are expected to be continued or get underway this year:

- Continue work on the \$4.9 million project in the South Branch of Bradley Creek/Michelle Drive area to improve major stormwater drainage systems.
- Begin work on the Stage 1 area of the \$5.4 million Wisteria/Clearbrook drainage project that includes replacing stormwater drainage culverts in the areas of Patricia Lane, Clearbrook, Shuney and Brittain drives, as well as restoring wetland areas. Stage II of this project includes installing drainage improvements from Dogwood Lane extending to 58th Street.
- Smaller drainage improvement projects in the Brenda Drive area and the primary drainage outfall for Lincoln Forest totaling approximately \$800,000.

